



Division of Agricultural Conservation & Technical Assistance

Massachusetts Food Ventures Program Fiscal Year 2017

(July 15, 2016 to June 30, 2017)

Request for Response (RFR): RFR File: [RFR-MFVP-2017](#)

For the implementation of
projects that increase access to Massachusetts grown, caught or harvested
healthy food and to improve economic opportunities for
low to moderate income communities.

**Responses must be received by
4:00 PM on August 12, 2016.**

**Contact: Rose Arruda
Telephone: 617-626-1849
Email: Rose.Arruda@state.ma.us**



**Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources
251 Causeway Street, Suite 500
Boston, MA 02114**

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary
Grant Announcement. RFR ID: [RFR-MFVP-2017](#) Dated: **July 15, 2016**
Massachusetts Food Ventures Program

1. GRANT OPPORTUNITY SUMMARY:

Proposals Sought For	The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (“MDAR”) seeks proposals for funding projects that will advance the Massachusetts Food Ventures Program (“MFVP”), help to implement the objectives of the Massachusetts Local Food Action Plan and provide economic opportunities that promote job creation enterprises or new businesses. MDAR is seeking to award grants statewide, primarily in communities of low or moderate income, to individuals or entities with experience developing and supporting food businesses.
Overview and Goals	<p>The overall goal of the MFVP is to increase access to healthy, affordable food options and improve economic opportunities for low to moderate income communities. The MFVP will provide funding through grants to support food ventures, sited primarily in or near communities of low or moderate income, including Gateway Cities and rural communities. The MFVP will help implement goals of the Massachusetts Local Food Action Plan and contribute to the financing needs of local Massachusetts food enterprises. With expanded investment, completed projects will improve access to Massachusetts grown, harvested or caught food products through the development of collaborations with local agricultural enterprises and private/public entities. Key areas for investment include: food processing infrastructure to meet the needs of the expanding local food system; improved distribution systems to support opportunities for equitable access to fresh local food; and retail outlet strategies that enhance access to healthy food.</p> <p>All projects must include measures to demonstrate the benefits of investment to food insecure communities.</p>
Funding Availability	Reimbursement grants of up to \$250,000 will be awarded on a competitive basis. A minimum of 50% of the proposed project cost must be a demonstrated cash match. Persons submitting successful proposals will be required to sign a contract with MDAR. Contracts are subject to Department funding availability.
Deadline	4:00 PM, August 12, 2016
Contact	Rose Arruda , Department of Agricultural Resources 251 Causeway Street, Suite 500 , Boston, MA 02114 Phone: (617) 626-1849 email: Rose.Arruda@state.ma.us

2. PERFORMANCE AND CONTRACT SPECIFICATIONS

A. Eligible Applicants:

Eligible Applicants

- Massachusetts Municipalities
- Massachusetts Non-Profit or For-Profit Organizations
- Individual Residents of Massachusetts

B. Eligible Project Areas:

While all projects that meet MFVP requirements will be considered, the categories listed below are examples of potential projects listed in their respective categories.

Food Processing Infrastructure

Creation of food processing infrastructure to ensure availability of Massachusetts produced foods and which can benefit low and moderate income households.

Non Retail: Food Commissaries

Innovative proposals by commercial food commissaries that connect local farms and partners, create new local food retail markets or improve marketing within low income communities. Proposals may include requests for support for infrastructure, distribution, processing and marketing plans that demonstrate increased access to low to moderate income communities.

Food Co-Ops

Proposals for construction, renovation or build-out of existing facilities.

Greenhouses and Farmers' markets

Develop and build facilities designed to increase year round access of diverse food production and distribution to existing or new markets to benefit low to moderate income communities.

Food Hubs

Capital for infrastructure to build or renovate sites for new or existing ventures that improve food access in low to moderate income communities.

Commercial Markets

Innovative projects that connect local food producers and partners in order to develop, build or renovate a large scale retail market, designed to improve distribution of healthy, locally produced food. Proposals may include initiatives for new construction or the renovation of an existing building. Must clearly document a community demand and outline a marketing strategy for expansion of food access and distribution in low to moderate income areas.

Mobile Markets/ Innovative Markets

To purchase, design, and upgrade vehicles to provide healthy Massachusetts food including meats, seafood, vegetables, and fresh or frozen produce for purchase. Must provide marketing strategy that demonstrates the expansion of access and distribution in low to moderate income communities.

C. Ineligible Project Areas:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for audits, feasibility studies or design work. Operation or maintenance costs associated with the proposed grant investment. Staff or consultant time on proposals for projects that have already been completed or for which the applicant seeks reimbursement.
D. Funding Availability & Allowable Expenditures	
Maximum Reimbursement	Reimbursement of up to \$250,000 will be awarded on a competitive basis. The minimum grant award is \$75,000. The Department may increase the maximum threshold at its discretion.
Funding	Use of grant funds is limited to costs identified in the grant application project budget. Grant and matching funds may not be used to pay rents or for normal operating or overhead costs. No indirect or fringe costs may be charged to the grant. The Department reserves the right to offer funding to selected projects at an amount less than requested in the application budget. Project funding must be expended and project work completed by the end of the state fiscal year, June 30, 2017. In the absence of foreseeable available funding, MDAR may terminate the contract. All funding is subject to appropriation.
Invoicing and Disbursement of Grant Funds	Funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis only. All projects must be completed by June 30, 2017, subject to Department funding sources. Documentation of all expenses is required and subject to audit. Satisfactory documentation in the form of cancelled checks, receipts, invoices, etc. for costs associated with approved projects must be dated prior to the June 30 th , 2017 deadline, submitted to MDAR and approved prior to reimbursement. Vendors shall submit for reimbursement utilizing an organizational invoice clearly stating the reimbursement period on the invoice. Only expenses incurred during the period of the contract are eligible for reimbursement. Any project costs that were incurred prior to an executed contract are NOT eligible for reimbursement from the Department.
Match	Applicants are required to contribute at least a 50% cash match of the total costs of the project.
E. Project Terms	
Site Visits	<p>The Department will require the applicant to cooperate in a field visit prior to final award determinations being made. A field visit DOES NOT guarantee funding for a proposed project. The purpose of the field visit may include, but is not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To verify the information that is presented in the proposal; View the operation and assess the resource to be addressed; Confirm the ability to implement and maintain the project; Develop a basis for future “before and after” comparisons.

F. Reporting

Reporting

The contract will require quarterly written reporting and a final report. Quarterly-project progress reports must provide the status, description and background of work performed. Reports must include a detailed timeline with milestones relating to all appropriate phases, describing deliverables completed, or if not completed, the work done towards completion. The Department will review the progress of awarded projects, on a monthly basis, to ensure they will meet completion deadlines.

G. Evaluation Criteria: Responses will be scored using the following measures:

- Project Feasibility: Proposal clearly identifies project objectives and outcomes and outlines measures to evaluate project performance. Project budget is clear, justified, accurately reflects needs and shows eligible match;
- Proposal demonstrates how program funding will increase year round access to Massachusetts produced, caught or harvested food and describes benefits to low to moderate income communities;
- Proposal shows how funds will have broad application and positive impacts on targeted communities;
- Creates new markets or builds new infrastructure that will increase Massachusetts food distribution, access or income and maximizes opportunities for training or permanent job creation;
- Project proposal is based on thorough market research to determine community need and demand for proposed project;
- Depth of applicant's management experience with similar scale projects, including years and number-;
- Clearly outlined how project will result in job creation including the number and types of full-time, part-time and or seasonal jobs to be created;
- Secures matching funds to maximize the impact of the MDAR grant investment;
- Creates partnerships and supports collaboration at the local level;

H. Application Submission Instructions:

An application form is attached and must be completed and received by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources by the response deadline. Applications that are sent by fax or electronically will **NOT** be accepted. **Please do not staple or put the application in a binder.** Applications must be received in MDAR's Boston office by 4:00PM on **August 12, 2016**. All materials must be sent to the attention of:

**Rose Arruda, Program Coordinator, Department of Agricultural Resources,
Suite 500, 251 Causeway Street, Boston, MA 02114**

I. Additional Required Documentation

If selected, the Respondent will be required to submit the following forms to complete the contract: Commonwealth Standard Contract Form, filled out and signed by the Respondent; EEA Scope and Budget Form; Commonwealth Terms and Conditions filled out by and signed by the Respondent*; Commonwealth W-9 tax information form filled out and signed by the Respondent*; Completed Contractor Authorized Signature Verification Form; Completed Electronic Funds Transfer Form; Proof of entity good standing in Massachusetts and IRS letter of Determination as 501 entity, if applicable.* If not already on file These forms do not need to be completed as part of the response. Assistance to complete these forms will be provided to Respondents selected to participate in the Program. These forms are available for review at www.mass.gov/osd or by request

3. DEADLINES AND PROCUREMENT CALENDAR

A. Release of RFR:	July 15, 2016
B. Information Sessions:	Bidders call is scheduled for July 28, 2016, 1 pm.
C. Application Deadline:	August 12, 2016 at 4:00 PM
D. Estimated Award Date:	Awards are estimated to be announced on late Summer, 2016.
E. Estimated Contract Start Date:	Late Summer, 2016. Notwithstanding any verbal representations by the parties, or an earlier start date listed in the Standard Contract Form, and only after an award is issued and a final scope of services has been negotiated, the effective start date of a contract shall be the latest of the following dates: the date the Standard Contract Form has been executed by an authorized signatory of the contractor and the procuring department; the date of secretariat or other approval(s) required by law or regulation; or a later date specified in the Standard Contract Form.

4. RFR SPECIFICATIONS

A. Type of Procurement: Grant
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Grant
B. Use of This Procurement by Single or Multiple Departments:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">This RFR is a single department procurement. Contracts awarded under this RFR will be utilized solely by MDAR.
C. Request for Single or Multiple Contractors:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Multiple
D. RFR Distribution Method:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">This RFR has been distributed by the Department's Farm and Market Newsletter, posted to the program's website at www.mass.gov/agr, and by a distribution list of requested applicants.This RFR has been distributed electronically via CommBuys. It is the responsibility of every Applicant to check CommBuys for any addenda or modifications to an RFR to which they intend to respond. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and its subdivisions accept no liability and will provide no accommodations to Applicants who fail to check for amended RFRs and submit inadequate or incorrect responses. Potential Respondents are advised to check the "last change" field on the summary page of RFRs for which they intend to submit a response to ensure they have the most recent RFR files.Respondents may not alter RFR language or any RFR component files. Those submitting a proposal must respond in accordance to the RFR directions and complete only those sections that prompt a Respondent for a response. Modifications to the body of this RFR, specifications, terms and conditions, or which change the intent of this RFR are prohibited. Any unauthorized alterations will disqualify response.

Official Use Only

Date Received: _____

Received By: _____

5. APPLICATION FORM**MASSACHUSETTS FOOD VENTURES PROGRAM (MFVP) (FISCAL YEAR 2017)****SECTION ONE. APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

Applicant Name

Organization

☐ Corporation; ☐ Partnership; ☐ LLC; ☐ Individual Business;
☐ Non profit /501(c)(3) ☐ Municipality;

Mailing Address

Contact Person
and Title

Office Phone

Cell Phone

Email

SECTION TWO. PROJECT SUMMARY:

In six sentences or less, provide a brief description of the purpose/objectives/scope of work of the proposal :

SECTION THREE. PROJECT DETAILS:

In a separate attachment fully describe in writing the project for which you are seeking funds. Applicants should respond to all of the items listed below. This section should not exceed 6 pages (three double sided pages). Font size should not be less than Times New Roman 10. Any additional documentation or attachments do not count toward the page limit.

A. Detailed Project Description:

1. Project Description: Describe purpose/objectives/scope of work for all tasks and a detailed timeline with milestones for all phases of the project, in monthly increments. Address all of the criteria outlined in Section G: Evaluation Criteria on Page 6. The proposal should describe how the project will create access to Massachusetts grown, harvested or caught fresh food, support Massachusetts agriculture and create employment.

2. Qualifications and Experience: Describe and document relevant qualifications and experience of the applicant organization and the principals that will be involved in the grant funded activity. List relevant work, projects and those of any external partnering entity and demonstrate that the applicant has sufficient, relevant experience and success in developing and operating a large scale enterprise. List the individuals who will work on the project and the respective roles.

3. Permits and Approvals: Proof of all necessary permits and approvals needed and any responsible agencies.

B. Project Budget:

1. Provide Budget: include all costs associated with the scope of work (Items not identified in the application will not be eligible for award).

2. Project funding sources: List all funding sources including matching funding commitments and copies of commitment letters.

C. Project Evaluation :

1. Criteria: Define your criteria or proposed methods for evaluating and measuring project success.

2. Long Term Plan: Outline your plan for sustaining the project beyond the grant period.

3. Final Report: All applicants accepted for funding will be required to complete a final report evaluating project outcomes and any lessons learned that could be applied elsewhere.

SECTION FOUR : ATTACHMENTS

Provide the following documents as attachments to your application. Attachments do not count towards the 6 page maximum requirement for Project Details :

- Resumes of project manager and key staff;
- Demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as well as data identifying the targeted population in meeting the project criteria;
- Financial documents that show all necessary financing is in place, including partner organizations;
- Signed agreements in place with identified investors and other project partners and description of roles and the relationship between the applicant and project partner;
- Proof of ownership or long term lease of land that is the subject of the grant, if any.

Construction or renovation projects will be required to provide:

- Initial design of architecture plans, stamped by engineer or architect, including proposed layout of structure;
- Proof of all permits;
- Timeline for benchmarks for project completion;
- Final stamped design of proposed building;
- Final layout of proposed structure
- Inventory or description of equipment and materials to be purchased

SECTION FIVE: ATTESTATION:

By signing this application you attest all statements herein are accurate and true. You also give permission to a site visit conducted by MDAR before a funding decision is made, if requested. All site visits will be arranged with you in advance.

Signature: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____